

Collection of documents relating to Manuel de Godoy, Pepita Tudó, Diego Clemencín and the House of Osuna (1791-1870)

A collection of handwritten and printed documents and miscellaneous papers, totalling 54 items, many mult-paged, mostly in Spanish, and some in French and German, partly from the library of Diego Clemencín, broadly dated between 1791 and ca. 1870, in various hands.

This collection brings together a significant set of documents of diverse nature, which can be divided into four distinct sections. Its chronological scope spans from Manuel de Godoy's early rise to power at the court of Carlos IV to succession proceedings in the second half of the 19th century concerning his family estate. Both the heterogeneity of the corpus and the thematic coherence of its core sections make this collection a primary source for understanding Hispanic courtly, political, and administrative culture between the late 18th century and the decades following the exile of the former royal "valido", the technical name of the royal favorite.

Section I: The first group of documents brings together official papers, credentials, communications, and military and administrative appointments directly or indirectly linked to Manuel de Godoy y Álvarez de Faria, from his early promotions in 1791 to those of 1807, just before his political fall. This collection allows us to understand the organization of the Spanish armed forces during this period, reformed since the arrival of the Bourbons and structured into two main branches: the army and the navy. The army, in turn, was organized into three main corps: the Royal Household Troops, the Permanent Service Troops, and the Militia. The first two corps are the most represented in the documents gathered here. Against this institutional backdrop, the documents allow us to follow, almost year by year, the rapid rise of the future "Prince of Peace" (Godoy's honorary title and courtly nickname) within the military, administrative, and courtly structure, revealing both the progressive concentration of power around him and the strategic placement of many of his close associates and relatives in key positions. Manuel de Godoy, indeed, enjoyed a meteoric rise: with the favor of Queen Maria Luisa of Parma, he ascended in just a few years from cadet to State Councilor, before reaching the age of twenty-five. After the signing of the peace treaty with France that ended the War of the Pyrenees (1793-1795), he received the title of "Prince of Peace," an exceptional distinction linked to the end of a long conflict and which marked the beginning of a highly valued Franco-Spanish alliance, of which he himself had been the principal architect, gaining thus enormous political capital, which he used as soon as he could. Taken as a whole, this documentary block provides a precise view of the internal dynamics of a court in transformation: heir to enlightened reformism, but already beset by tensions between absolutism, noble resistance and the pressures derived from the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars, the governmental task of the king and his entourage oscillated between random foreign affairs and internal revolts and pressures, which marked with their rhythm, the day-to-day life of the royal scriptorium.

Section II: The second group of documents consists entirely of records relating to the so-called El Escorial Trial and Godoy's abrupt fall from grace between October 1807 and April 1808. By then, Godoy had ruled Spanish politics with authority for almost two decades, and his figure had become increasingly unpopular. The heir, the future King Fernando VII, began to lead an opposition party and ended up implicated in a plot against Godoy and the queen, with the aim of removing him from power. Once the conspiracy was discovered, the young Fernando was arrested: the judicial proceedings became known as the El Escorial Trial, and they had immense political significance and implications, as personal betrayals, ambitions, and secret pacts intertwined with the urgent need for reforms within the power struggle between the court, the clergy, the bourgeoisie, and the people. All of this took place within the same context in which the Treaty of Fontainebleau (negotiated under Godoy's supervision) allowed the entry of French troops into the Iberian Peninsula. Fernando's plot and the ensuing legal proceedings were direct antecedents of the Mutiny of Aranjuez, a popular revolt that led to Godoy's downfall, his violent capture (which nearly cost him his life), and the abdication of Carlos IV in favor of his son Fernando VII. The official communications of this group of documents allow us to reconstruct, with chronological precision, the deterioration of the relationship between Carlos IV, his favorite Godoy, and the rising of Fernando, then Prince of Asturias, and illustrate the climate of palace intrigue that preceded the mutiny and the terminal crisis of the precarious balance that had sustained Godoy's power for so long.

Section III: The third group consists of a series of letters exchanged between Diego Clemencín y Viñas, a scholar, educator, and liberal politician, and María Josefa Alonso Pimentel y Borja, the 12th Countess-Duchess of Benavente and one of the most influential Hispanic Enlightenment figures of her time. These letters document the relationship between the two, particularly regarding Clemencín's duties as tutor to the children of the House of Osuna, as well as the payments, administrative tasks, and domestic affairs arising from this role. The House of Osuna, established as a dukedom in the second half of the 16th century, became one of the most powerful poles of the Spanish nobility. Its remarkable expansion of wealth and cultural predominance during the 18th century (driven, among other factors, by the marriage between Pedro de Alcántara Téllez-Girón y Pacheco and the very Countess-Duchess of Benavente) consolidated a first-rate artistic and intellectual patronage. Hence, by the early 19th century, the House of Osuna was considered the most prominent noble family in Spain. The correspondence gathered here allows us to reconstruct a fragment of the intellectual life of the court during that period and the central educational and cultural role of the House, whose library (directed by Clemencín from 1798) was the first semi-public library in modern Spain.

Section IV: The fourth block of documents comprises writings in French and German, dated approximately between 1850 and 1870, related to the administration and succession of the assets of Godoy and his second wife, Josefa de Tudó y Catalán Alemany, as well as

references to their son, Manuel Luis de Godoy y Tudó, his mother's sole heir. The figure of Josefa Tudó, also known as "Pepita Tudó," gained notoriety during her lifetime: she was Godoy's protégée, lover, and later wife, and after his fall from grace in 1808, she moved with him to France, where she assumed a central role in managing his estate. Some art historians maintain, with valid reasons, that she was the model for Francisco de Goya's famous *majas*; it is certain that in 1808 Godoy owned both versions of the work, *La maja vestida* and *La maja desnuda*, which contributed to fueling the legend, in addition to Pepita's physical resemblance to the woman portrayed—by the way, Diego Velázquez's famous *Venus en el espejo*, currently in the National Gallery of London, also belonged to Manuel Godoy. The documents in this section, of a legal-administrative nature, offer testimony to the dispersal and complex administration of the Godoy estate after the exile and death of the king's former plenipotentiary minister.

The collection opens with a title page bearing a note in German: "Godoy, 1791-1808. Clemencin und Osuna," indicating that the documents migrated from Spain at some point. It also retains a label indicating the location of the Biblioteca de Don Diego Clemencín, accompanied by the inscription: "Documentos referentes al Príncipe de la Paz Don Manuel Godoy y causa del Escorial" ("Documents relating to the Prince of the Peace, Don Manuel Godoy, and the Escorial case"). This suggests that a substantial part of the collection originally belonged to that library, a conjecture reinforced by the fact that some of the earliest communications are addressed to the Duke of Osuna himself.

Other documents related to Clemencín remain in institutions such as the University of Pennsylvania; ¹ however, the presence of documents from after 1834 and written outside the Hispanic world suggests that the compilation was expanded during the 19th century, perhaps in German-French circles frequented by members of the Godoy family. In this sense, the volume's coherence seems to stem less from a single origin than from a later historical assessment of the figure and his milieu, reflecting a desire to gather and perpetuate his memory by individuals who came long after the events.

These documents offer an exceptional insight into the daily life, of the Bourbon court in the final years of the Old Regime. They vividly depict the rise and fall of Manuel de Godoy, as well as the conflicts that preceded the Mutiny of Aranjuez and the abdication of Carlos IV in favor of Fernando VII. They also shed light on the tensions between the monarchy, the nobility, and court factions during a period marked by external crises, military defeats, and political realignments. Meanwhile, the correspondence between Clemencín and the Countess-Duchess of Benavente illustrates the enlightened cultural life of the Madrid elite (and of noble houses in general), while later documents reveal the complex conflicts arising from the management and succession of Godoy's estate.

The collection contains the following pieces, mostly handwritten (in the case of printed pieces, this is expressly indicated in the descriptions below):

- 1) Letter from Manuel Negrete de la Torre, Count of Campo de Alange, to Don Manuel Pacheco, Captain of the Quartermaster Corps of the Royal Corps of Guards, in which he communicates the appointment of Manuel de Godoy y Álvarez as assistant within the Royal Corps of Guards. January 1791.
- 2) Letter from Manuel Negrete de la Torre, Count of Campo de Alange, to the Colonel of the Regiment of Royal Spanish Guards, in which he communicates that the General Inspection of Militias was conferred upon Don Luis de Godoy, son of Manuel de Godoy y Álvarez. Aranjuez, April 1795.
- 3) Letter from Manuel Negrete de la Torre, Count of Campo de Alange, to the Duke of Osuna, in which he communicates that Manuel de Godoy y Álvarez, Duke of Alcudia, received the title of Prince of the Peace. San Ildefonso, September 1795.
- 4) Letter to the Duke of Osuna, communicating the appointment of Diego de Godoy, younger brother of Manuel de Godoy, as inspector general of dragoons. San Lorenzo del Escorial, September 1796.
- 5) Letter from Pedro de Alcántara Téllez-Girón y Pacheco, Duke of Osuna, to José Ibáñez Arco, Marquis of Valbuena de Duero, in which he communicates that Juan Manuel de Álvarez reported the appointment of Manuel de Godoy y Álvarez, Prince of the Peace, as Colonel of all Infantry Regiments. 1797.
- 6) Letter from José Antonio Caballero to Pablo de Sangro y Merode, Prince of Castelfranco, in which he communicates a change in the communication policy regarding the application for licenses. Royal Palace (Madrid), 1801.
- 7) Letter from José Antonio Caballero to Pablo de Sangro y Merode, Prince of Castelfranco, in which he communicates modifications in the policy of correspondence and transmission of orders in the highest ranks of the military structure. San Ildefonso, October 1801.
- 8) Letter from José Antonio Caballero to the Colonels of the Regiments of Royal Spanish Guards, in which he communicates provisions relating to the type of honors that the Royal Corps of Spanish and Infantry Guards must render to Manuel de Godoy y Álvarez, Prince of the Peace. San Lorenzo del Escorial, 1801.
- 9) Letter from José Antonio Caballero to Pablo de Sangro y Merode, Prince of Castelfranco, in which he communicates that Manuel de Godoy y Álvarez, Prince of the Peace, appointed Tomás de Morla as Chief of the Royal Armies. San Lorenzo del Escorial, October 1801.
- 10) Letter from José Antonio Caballero to Pablo de Sangro y Merode, Prince of Castelfranco, in which he communicates that Manuel de Godoy y Álvarez, Prince of the Peace, appointed Domingo de Granada as Chief of the Royal Navy. San Lorenzo del Escorial, October 1801.
- 11) Letter from José Antonio Caballero to Pablo de Sangro y Merode, Prince of Castelfranco, in which he communicates that he informed Manuel de Godoy y Álvarez, Prince of the Peace, about a consideration of King Carlos IV regarding the distinctions and honors that correspond to him on his travels. Aranjuez, March 1801.
- 12) Communication from Manuel de Godoy y Álvarez, Prince of the Peace, in which

he communicates that he is sending a manifesto on the war against Great Britain, initiated at the end of 1804. Madrid, December 1804. .

13) Printed memorial written by Manuel de Godoy y Álvarez, Prince of the Peace, in which he calls for war against Great Britain and offers an extensive explanation of the offenses attributed to that nation. Madrid, December 1804. .

14) Letter from Joaquín de Palafox, in which he communicates that José Antonio Caballero reported that Pedro de Cevallos wrote that King Carlos IV, in a royal decree, established that Manuel de Godoy y Álvarez, Prince of the Peace, has precedence in matters of vacancies. January 1807. .

15) Letter from Joaquín de Palafox, in which he communicates that José Antonio Caballero reported the appointment of Diego de Godoy as Colonel of the Regiment of Royal Spanish Infantry Guards. Madrid, July 1807.

16) Letter communicating that the Secretary of the Office of Grace and Justice reported that King Carlos IV made known the news of the arrest of his son, the future King Fernando VII, for conspiracy against the Crown. October 1807.

17) Court ruling published in print as an extraordinary issue of the Gaceta de Madrid (virtually, at that time, the official bulletin of the Spanish State), under the early reign of Fernando VII, in which it is indicated that no evidence was found of the accusations against the monarch for conspiracy against the Crown in the possession of his father (see previous document), and that such accusations were an invention of Manuel de Godoy y Álvarez, who was at odds with Fernando. March 1808. .

18) Printed proclamation in which the still King Carlos IV, in the context of the Mutiny of Aranjuez (for which he would end up abdicating in favor of his son), authorizes the Prince of Asturias, future Fernando VII, to bring charges against Manuel de Godoy y Álvarez, already imprisoned. March 1808. .

19) Printed document in which Arias Antonio Mon y Velarde, instructor in the case against Manuel de Godoy y Álvarez, communicates to the governor of Málaga the notification from José Antonio Caballero that Godoy is exonerated from the positions of Generalissimo and Admiral. March 1808. .

20) Printed document in which Bartolomé Muñoz communicates that King Fernando VII resolved to confiscate the assets, effects, shares and rights of Manuel de Godoy y Álvarez. March 1808.

21) Letter to the Lieutenant Colonel of the Royal Spanish Guards, in which it is communicated that the Infante Antonio Pascual de Borbón ordered that a room be prepared to imprison Diego de Godoy. Royal Palace (Madrid), April 1808.

22) Letter to the Lieutenant Colonel of the Royal Spanish Guards, in which information is communicated regarding the maintenance and situation of Diego de Godoy as a prisoner. April 1808.

23) Communication reporting on the maintenance and situation of Diego de Godoy as a prisoner. April 1808. .

24) Extensive letter from Simón de Viegas, prosecutor in the El Escorial Trial against Fernando VII for conspiracy, in which he defends his actions and argues that he had

no alternatives to proceed. 25) Cover that begins a new set of documents, with a handwritten note in German that refers to Diego Clemencín and María Josefa Alonso Pimentel y Borja, Countess-Duchess of Benavente and Duchess of Osuna. It alludes to several of the documents that follow. .

26) Letter from María Josefa Alonso Pimentel y Borja, Countess-Duchess of Benavente and Duchess of Osuna, to Diego Clemencín, in which she asks him if he wishes to work as tutor and educator of her children. Madrid, January 1788.

27) Letter from María Josefa Alonso Pimentel y Borja, Countess-Duchess of Benavente and Duchess of Osuna, to Diego Clemencín, in which she reports that the latter accepted the commission of the previous letter and requests details about a future meeting, in which they will meet. Madrid, January 1788.

28) Letter from María Josefa Alonso Pimentel y Borja, Countess-Duchess of Benavente and Duchess of Osuna, to Diego Clemencín, regarding a possible meeting in Aranjuez during the month of June. Madrid, May 1788.

29) Letter from Diego Clemencín to María Josefa Alonso Pimentel y Borja, Countess-Duchess of Benavente and Duchess of Osuna, regarding difficulties in epistolary communication and a scheduled meeting. Madrid, June 1788. .

30) Letter from María Vicenta [...] to Diego Clemencín, in which she comments that Madrid has been abandoned, even by the French. Madrid, July, probably 1808.

31) Letter from María Josefa Alonso Pimentel y Borja, Countess-Duchess of Benavente and Duchess of Osuna, to Diego Clemencín, regarding her delicate personal financial situation and outstanding payments to Clemencín. Cádiz, 1812

32) A lengthy letter from Diego Clemencín to María Josefa Alonso Pimentel y Borja, Countess-Duchess of Benavente and Duchess of Osuna, in which he demands payment owed in connection with the estate of Pedro de Alcántara Téllez-Girón y Pacheco, the Countess-Duchess's husband, who died in 1807, and in response to another letter from the Countess-Duchess (see following document). The letter constitutes a virulent, point-by-point critique of the Countess-Duchess's arguments, including personal attacks. Sine loco, 1810s.

33) Letter from María Josefa Alonso Pimentel y Borja, Countess-Duchess of Benavente and Duchess of Osuna, to Diego Clemencín, in which she denies knowledge of the payments related to the estate. Cádiz, 1810s.

34) Letter from María Josefa Alonso Pimentel y Borja, Countess-Duchess of Benavente and Duchess of Osuna, to Diego Clemencín, in which she agrees to make a payment and refers the matter to her secretary and her accountant. Cádiz, 1813

35) Letter from Miguel de la Herrán Terán to Diego Clemencín, in which he arranges a meeting and comments on a problem regarding a piece of land. Cádiz, January 1813.

36) Letter from Miguel de la Herrán Terán to Diego Clemencín, about money issues. Madrid, September 1814.

37) Letter from Julián Aznar to Diego Clemencín, in which he manages the payments due by order of María Josefa Alonso Pimentel y Borja, Countess-Duchess of Benavente and Duchess of Osuna. Madrid, September 1814.

- 38) Letter from Julián Aznar to Diego Clemencín, regarding payments and receipts. September 1814.
- 39) Letter to the Duke of Osuna, in which Pedro Pablo Alcántara de Silva Fernández de Híjar y Abarca de Bolea, Duke of Híjar, is informed that the Duke of Osuna himself, Pedro de Alcántara Téllez-Girón y Pacheco, requests for his son Pedro Girón to be able to combine the symbols of the Order of Santiago and the Order of the Knights of Saint John. San Ildefonso, July 1796.
- 40) Letter from María Josefa Alonso Pimentel y Borja, Countess-Duchess of Benavente and Duchess of Osuna, to Diego Clemencín, in which she communicates the sending of an order to Madrid to consult the news relating to a payment owed linked to the testamentary estate. Cádiz, July 1813. .
- 41) Printed communication from Ángel Vallejo, indicating that King Fernando VII communicates that the parliament (i.e., the “Cortes”), presided over by Diego Clemencín, reduced the taxes on the introduction of scientific instruments into Spain
- 42) Printed document listing the noble titles and honorary positions of María Josefa Alonso Pimentel y Borja, Countess-Duchess of Benavente and Duchess of Osuna
- 43) Portrait of María Josefa Alonso Pimentel y Borja, Countess-Duchess of Benavente and Duchess of Osuna. .
- 44) Heraldic shield, surmounted by a crown and supported by two rampant lions, accompanied by multiple decorations and with the Latin motto on a blue ribbon “Tu in ea et ego pro ea” (“You, in it, and I in its favor”), and on a white ribbon Más vale volando (“Better flying”).
- 45) Letter from Manuel de Godoy, written in French, in which he inquires about matters related to his passport or marriage certificate. Boulogne-sur-Mer (France), July 1829.
- 46) Letter wrapper, written in German, apparently addressed to a person surnamed Behr.
- 47) Letter in German dated in Berlin, December 22, 1847 (?).
- 48) Letter in German, from the mid-19th century .
- 49) Letter in German, signed by Ernst Kossak (1814-1880), a prominent journalist and writer who spent his career in Berlin and is considered the creator of the 19th-century Berlin feuilleton. He was interested in a wide variety of historical subjects and was the editor of the Berliner Montag-Post, a newspaper for politics, society, literature and art, published until 1864. He also devoted himself to chess, about which he wrote extensively in the journal of the Berlin Chess Society, of which he was also editor..
- 50) Letter in German, from the mid-19th century.
- 51) Letter in German, from the mid-19th century, mentioning places in France.
- 52) Document in French containing the will of Josefina Tudó (“Pepita Tudó”), second wife of Manuel de Godoy y Álvarez, who died in 1869, in which she indicates that her sole heir is her son, Manuel Luis de Godoy y Tudó. She also expresses her wish for a simple burial. The will was presented in October 1867 before the notary Mariano

García Sancha and the final certifications were signed in January 1868.

53) Document in French with provisions relating to the estate and will of the Prince of Bassano, probably referring to Manuel Luis de Godoy y Tudó, corresponding to the decades of 1860-1870.

54) Copy, probably photographic, of a portrait of Manuel de Godoy y Álvarez.

The collection of documents refers to several key figures of the period, including:

Carlos IV (1748-1819), King of Spain

Diego Clemencín y Viñas (1765-1834), scholar, academic and educator

Fernando VII (1784-1833), King of Spain

Josefa de Tudó y Catalán Alemany (1779-1869), lover and second wife of Godoy

Manuel de Godoy y Álvarez de Faria (1767-1851), Prince of Peace

María Josefa Alonso Pimentel y Borja (1752-1834), Duchess of Osuna, prominent patron of the arts

Pedro Félix de Ceballos y Guerra (1759-1838), diplomat and minister

Pedro Pablo Alcántara de Silva Fernández de Híjar (1741-1808), 9th Duke of Híjar

The collection of documents touches on matters linked, directly or indirectly, to the following historical themes:

Bourbon reforms

Napoleonic invasions of the Iberian Peninsula

Treaty of Valençay

Treaty of San Ildefonso

Aranjuez Convention

War of the Convention

War of the Oranges

Battle of Trafalgar

Treaty of Fontainebleau

The Escorial Conspiracy

The Escorial Trial

Mutiny of Aranjuez

Abdications of Bayonne

Peace of Basel

La maja vestida and La maja desnuda, by Francisco de Goya

Latinamerican independences

The documents provide direct access to various phenomena central to the evolution of the Bourbon state and the political and institutional transformations that marked the transition from the 18th to the 19th century in Spain and the Americas. Its thematic breadth makes it a collection especially valuable for those who investigate the construction of monarchical power, the

circulation of political information, and the tensions between sovereignty, nobility, and bureaucracy in the Hispanic world.